

COUNTY OF PLACER
PROBATION DEPARTMENT DESCRIPTION
JUVENILE SERVICES
INTERVIEWS AUGUST 15–16, 2000

Interview Process

On-site interviews with seven stakeholder groups were conducted in Auburn on August 15 and 16, 2000. The groups were divided into juvenile and adult services, except for the chief probation officer and senior staff and the county administrator's office staff, who participated in both juvenile and adult service discussions. The seven stakeholder groups were as follows:

1. Judges and court administrators
2. Chief probation officer and senior staff
3. Line supervisors and probation officers
4. Prosecutors and defense attorneys
5. County administrators
6. Public community agencies
7. Private community agencies

A total of 48 people were interviewed. This number included 2 judges and 1 court administrator, 10 senior probation managers, 11 first-line supervisors and line staff, 19 public and private agency representatives, 3 prosecutors and defense attorneys, and 2 staff members from the county administrator's office. Several stakeholder groups addressed the same questions. Separate reports addressing juvenile and adult services have been prepared for Placer County. Although many of the answers in both reports are the same or similar, the questions were addressed separately by juvenile and adult services stakeholders.

Prior to the on-site interviews, several actions occurred. Eighteen categories related to juvenile and adult services were developed. Each category included several questions

specific to that topic. These questions were discussed, modified, and clarified at a meeting with representatives from the six counties selected to be part of this process. To accommodate the time frames of this project, participating counties were asked to address the questions in writing and to provide as much information as possible prior to the actual interviews. *This report combines all responses and does not specifically identify the part of the justice system reporting.* The 18 categories are as follows:

- I. Demographic Information
- II. Organizational Structure
- III. Department Mission and Objectives
- IV. Policies and Procedure
- V. Monitoring and Evaluation Process
- VI. Management Information Systems
- VII. Funding Sources
- VIII. Probation Services
- IX. Specialized Court Services
- X. Probation and Private Service Provider Partnerships
- XI. Staff Development and Training
- XII. Communication Systems
- XIII. Program or Service Gaps
- XIV. Partnership with Judiciary
- XV. Partnership with Prosecutors and Defense Attorneys
- XVI. Partnership with Other Collaborative County Departments
- XVII. Juvenile Probation Partnership with Education System
- XVIII. Strengths of Probation Department

PLACER COUNTY JUVENILE SERVICES DESCRIPTION

A total of 32 stakeholders addressed the questions related to juvenile services. The participant breakdown was as follows:

- One judge
- Ten senior managers
- Six supervisors and probation officers
- Six private community agency representatives
- Four public community agency representatives
- One prosecutor and one defense attorney
- Two representatives from the county administrator's office

I. Demographic Information

A. Description of the county

Placer County is located adjacent to Sacramento County. Its 226,000 total population includes an unincorporated population of 94,800. The western end extends from the valley floor in the west to the high Sierra in the east. The population of Placer County is projected to increase at a rate of at least 36% between 1997 and 2005, making this county one of the fastest growing in the state.

The median income is \$37,600. Eighty-five percent of the population 25 years of age and older have completed high school. Thirty-three percent have an associate's degree, and 22 percent have a bachelor's degree.

The largest ethnic group is Caucasian (87.2 percent). Hispanics (8.7 percent); American Indians, Asians, and others (3.4 percent); and African Americans (0.7 percent) make up the balance. Placer County has limited cultural diversity, views itself as politically conservative, and is the second-fastest growing county in

California. It is considered a mini-Silicon Valley, has a low tax base, and has a large retirement community.

B. Size of probation department

- As of July 2000, the probation department has 132 budgeted positions
- The probation department is divided into 10 divisions, plus the chief and two deputy chiefs:
 - Chief and two deputy chiefs 3 positions
 - Administrative support 18 positions
 - Adult division 19 positions
 - Community corrections 16 positions
 - Juvenile division 18 positions
 - Systems of care 10 positions
 - Tahoe branch 4 positions
 - Business office 2 positions
 - Juvenile detention 26 positions
 - Special services 4 positions
 - Central kitchen 12 positions

C. Juvenile offender monthly population, including types of offenses

- Probation supervision 341
- Informal probation 26
- Delayed court order 71
- Diversion 25
- Drug court 27
- Disposition reports 31

The primary offense categories are property, assault and battery, drug offenses, and weapons charges. There is limited gang activity in the county, with the exception of Roseville.

D. Juvenile hall staffing and population data

- The new juvenile hall has a capacity of 70
- The population from March to August 2000 has increased from 26 to 51
- The average stay is 16 days
- Placer County contracts for beds in two out-of-county facilities
- Contracts with CYA

II. Organizational Structure

A. History of structure

- In 1994, the county hired a consultant to study the organizational structure
- In 1998, counselors in the juvenile hall were converted to probation officer positions
- In July 1999, the assistant chief position was eliminated in exchange for two deputy chief positions

B. Theory behind organizational structure

- Divisions are created around similar duties within specified geographic locations
- Deputy chief positions enable the chief to concentrate on administrative responsibilities

C. Reporting lines of authority

- Four layers of management:
 - Chief
 - Deputy chief
 - Manager
 - Senior probation officers (sometimes have supervisory responsibilities)

D. Discuss organizational structure strengths

- Some units have a 3:1 staff-to-supervisor ratio

- Interchangeable probation officer positions from juvenile hall to probation provide the department with additional flexibility

E. Suggested organizational changes

- Juvenile hall needs a supervisor for each shift
- Supervising probation officers should not carry a caseload
- Divisions should be consolidated

III. Department Mission and Objectives

A. Written department mission statement

- There is a mission statement for the department that was completed 18 months ago

B. Written juvenile services mission statements

- Juvenile probation services use the department's mission statement

C. Written annual objectives for juvenile services

- There are no written annual objectives
- There are specific management goals and objectives for each division that are not shared with all levels of the department

D. Discuss staff involvement in the mission statement process

- Management team prepared the mission statement

E. Discuss how objectives are implemented within the department

- Management driven

III. Policies and Procedures

A. Does the department have a policies and procedures manual?

How often is it revised?

- Each division has a policies and procedures manual
- Reviewed one year ago
- Administrative manual contains department policies and procedures
- Department is constantly reviewing and adding new policies
- Board of Corrections monitors policies at the juvenile hall

B. How are policies and procedures implemented?

- Each manager takes on the responsibility of discussing policies with staff
- All staff have policies and procedures manuals and are responsible for keeping them updated

C. Describe the process used to prepare policies

- Chief probation officer and deputy chiefs have primary responsibility for preparation, with some assistance from managers
- Committee of line staff and managers discuss policies
- Line probation officers prepare certain policies that pertain to their primary responsibilities
- Policy development is usually reactive

D. Describe staff input in policy development

- Probation officers usually have no input in policy development
- Usually solicit agreement by managers
- Usually a knee-jerk reaction

E. Describe the process used to monitor policies and procedures

- Division managers are responsible for discussing policy/procedure issues with staff

V. Monitoring and Evaluation Process

A. Describe the evaluation procedures for programs and services

- Grant programs have evaluation components as part of the award system
- Children's system of care has an outside independent evaluator
- All other programs and services do not have evaluation components
- Evaluation procedures and resulting data are informal

B. Are evaluations designed on performance-based measures?

- No

C. Describe how monitoring and evaluation information is reported to the CPO

- Discussed at SMART meetings
- Discussed at management meetings

D. Describe how this information is integrated into programs and services

- Informally

E. Describe how information from evaluations is integrated into management decisions

- Management reviews material on evaluated special programs

VI. Management Information Systems

A. Describe the current information system

- Current system is operated on countywide network/servers managed by the county information technology unit (IT)
- System provides intra- and intercounty e-mail services as well as Internet access
- Office automation software is standardized throughout the county
- An integrated justice software system, Tiburon, has been installed but is not fully implemented
- Old system worked better

- Exchange of information with sheriff is done manually
- System periodically is down
- There is an MIS technology group on site within the department
- Case management information for juvenile services is available
- Tiburon has been operational for approximately five years
- The individuals who determine department needs keep changing
- Juvenile hall has problems getting booking information

B. Assess the efficiency of the information system

- Tiburon is evaluated as 50 to 75% efficient
- Fingerprint access is electronically transmitted in a timely fashion

C. Describe how information needs are determined

- Needs are determined by management and department MIS staff
- No probation officer input
- County meets as a group with probation as one voice

D. Does a users committee exist and what is the composition?

- There is no users committee
- MIS staff meet regularly with county IT

E. Describe how the MIS interacts with other parts of the system

- Department accesses data via personal computers operated by the county IT department
- Sheriff's department and probation are working toward a records management system

F. Discuss additional information needs

- Need to extract regularly generated reports from Tiburon
- Need to have capability to access special one-time reports from Tiburon
- Need more integrated access to justice system

- Need more access to the Department of Health and Human Services
- Need improved in-house technical support

G. What are the computer equipment needs?

- Additional personal computers
- Need laptops
- Computer needs are determined by county IT department
- Some managers do not have access to personal computers
- MIS staff must stay current on technology advancements

VII. Funding Sources

A. What is the total budget?

- Total gross budget for FY 2001 \$8,790,220
- General fund contributions \$3,064,614
- Revenues \$5,062,252

B. What are the major line items?

- Salaries/benefits \$6,171,122
- Services/supplies \$1,194,534
- Other charges \$500,000
- Fixed assets \$35,595
- Charges from departments \$1,024,546

C. What are your various funding sources?

- Title IV-E \$152,250
- TANF \$447,578
- Public safety fund \$2,500,000
- Supervision fees \$67,000
- Presentence investigations \$101,000
- Community corrections fees \$886,231

- Schools, children's
system of care \$684,093

D. Where are your greatest funding item deficits?

- TANF
- Collections from other departments or agencies

E. Level of CPO control over budget

- CPO has control over department budget
- Participates in county board committees

F. Large budget category comparisons for the past five years

- FY 1997: \$5,420,317 General fund: \$3,824,689 Other: \$3,116,739
- FY 1998: \$6,464,002 General fund: \$3,624,076 Other: \$3,791,563
- FY 1999: \$6,928,480 General fund: \$3,514,907 Other: \$4,295,832
- FY 2000: \$7,262,731 General fund: \$3,176,553 Other: \$4,059,178
- FY 2001: \$8,790,220 General fund: \$3,064,614 Other: \$5,062,252

Since fiscal year 1997, there has been a 62 percent increase in the total budget revenue. The fiscal year 2001 budget includes 35 percent from general funds and 65 percent from other revenue sources. From fiscal year 1997 to 2001, the general fund contributions to the probation department have decreased from 70 percent to 35 percent. During that same time period, money obtained from other revenue sources has increased 162 percent.

VIII. Probation Services

A. Discuss the automated and validated needs/risk tools being used

- Juvenile division does not use a risk assessment instrument
- Level of supervision is based on status standards: formal, informal, tier III, or deferred entry of judgment

- There are no banked caseloads for juveniles

B. Describe any specialized assessment services you provide

- None

C. What are the current probation supervision workload standards?

- Children's system of care or informal probation 10 cases
- Tier III 15–25 cases
- Probation supervision 50–70 cases

D. Describe how these workload standards are determined

- Juvenile manager determined the juvenile formal and informal standards
- Tier III standard was set by the committee that created the program
- Standards were not determined by time-study methods
- Standards are determined by the number of cases and probation officers available

E. Describe the case plan process (supervision plan)

- All juveniles in the department have a case plan

F. Describe the continuum of services offered to probationers from least to most restrictive sanctions

- Diversion
- First offender
- Peer court
- Informal probation
- Formal probation
- Drug court
- Placement
- Probation ranch/boot camp

G. Are there eligibility criteria for entering and exiting each program and service? Please describe.

- Generally no specific eligibility criteria
- There is criteria for drug court

H. What sanctions along the continuum are *not* available?

- Proposition 21 impacts deferred entry of judgment cases
- Juvenile hall programs
- Need for transitional services
- Drug counseling outside of drug court

- Long time lapses to access services have a negative impact:
 - It takes a long time to process community referrals
 - Need quicker access to family counseling

I. Describe the role the judiciary plays in the intermediate sanctions system

- Commissioner is actively involved in sanctions decisions
- Usually concurs with probation officer recommendations
- Good partnership approach

J. What role does the judiciary play in determining the types of supervision sanctions needed?

- Discusses juvenile with probation officer

K. Are there any mandated sanctions?

- None listed

IX. Specialized Court Services

A. List the specialized programs in your county

- Drug court

- Mental health calendar
- Peer court
- Dependency drug court
- Day reporting center

B. Describe the relationship between these programs and probation

- All specialized courts have excellent working relationships with probation
- Relationships are interactive
- All parties are part of the planning process
- Probation officers are dedicated

X. Probation and Private Service Provider Partnerships

A. Describe the services private vendors provide to the probation department

- Electronic monitoring
- Medical services to juvenile hall
- Substance abuse treatment
- Victim offender mediation
- Counseling services
- Life skills education
- Education/awareness programs
- Court schools
- All private vendor services are client supported

B. How does probation staff view these services or programs?

- Probation staff views providers as an integral part of the probation services program
- Value the services private vendors provide
- Quality of services is mixed
- Probation should eliminate the poor service providers

XI. Staff Development and Training

A. Describe the specific training subjects offered to staff

- Each new probation officer receives 240 hours of training from the state
- Each probation officer is required to have 40 hours of training annually
- Each institution worker is required to take 24 hours of annual training
- Each new supervisor and manager receives 80 hours of required training
- Each employee receives an in-house orientation program
- Training is offered using internal staff as instructors

B. List the training courses that are mandatory

- CPR
- Weaponless defense
- Use of force
- First aid
- Medical issues for juvenile hall staff
- Telecommunication security

C. Describe how staff training needs are determined

- Statewide mandates
- Managers determine staff needs
- Line staff request specific training courses
- Most training is in-house

D. Describe the process used to get staff input for training needs

- Surveys
- Officer choice and selection
- Officers make suggestions to managers
- Limited money for outside training limits the choices

E. Describe the types of cross-training taking place

- Policy to rotate officers contributes to cross-training

F. Describe the management training being offered

- After promotion to supervisor or manager, an 80-hour course is provided
- Sixteen hours of training annually
- County offers supervisory management training

XII. Communication Systems

A. Describe the department's staff meeting schedule

- The chief and deputies meet on a weekly basis
- Managers meet with supervisors monthly
- No regularly scheduled meetings with managers and deputy chiefs
- No regularly scheduled meetings with probation officers within divisions
- No regularly scheduled meetings with supervisors and probation officers
- No regularly scheduled meetings with deputy chiefs

B. Describe the process used to disseminate day-to-day information to line staff

- E-mail
- Voice mail
- Memoranda
- Fax
- Minutes of management meetings
- Face-to-face contacts

XIII. Program or Service Gaps

A. Discuss the resources, services, or programs you need to provide a more effective probation service

- Early intervention programs for nonadjudicated minors are understaffed
- Expansion of diversion program
- Drug court residential component
- Mental health services for juvenile hall
- Need for mentors
- Modernization of equipment such as computers, upgraded monitors, video equipment
- Transitional services after placement
- Juvenile hall needs many services
- Services in Tahoe are very limited
- Need wrap-around services
- Lockdown facilities are not available
- Victim services for juveniles
- Increased community supervision
- More timely referral by probation to peer court
- Juvenile court facilitator to provide timely information to parents of juveniles already in the system

B. Are any programs mandated?

- None discussed

XIV. Partnership with Judiciary

A. What services does probation provide for the judiciary?

- Disposition reports
- Oral detention reports
- Staff drug court program
- Court officers unit
- Deferral reporting center
- Probation review reports
- Supervision

- Revocation reports

B. Describe the relationship between the judiciary and the probation department

- Probation see itself as an arm of the court
- Excellent relationship
- Two-way communication is operational
- Some judges are very involved in probation operations
- Judges do not micromanage probation
- Judges occasionally get personal with probation staff
- Judicial follow-through is excellent

C. Describe the process used by probation and the judiciary to ensure that the judiciary has the broadest possible sentencing alternatives

- Probation department provides all sentencing alternatives to the court
- Judges closely address the reasons why probation is making a specific recommendation
- Judges are given a wealth of information
- Judges can access services within the probation department
- Meetings are held with judges every six months to discuss options

D. What changes or enhancements are needed to improve this partnership?

- Partnership is good
- More meetings between probation and the judiciary
- Assist the judiciary by getting outside services in a more timely manner

XV. Partnership with Prosecutors and Defense Attorneys

A. What are the points of interaction among probation, prosecutors, and public defenders?

- Constant contact between public defender and probation

- Public defender and probation share information about the home situation
- Prosecutor and public defender get disposition reports
- Open exchange of information between probation and public defender
- Constant contact between prosecutor and public defender with court officer unit
- Probation gets good reception when contacting public defender about client information
- Public defender and prosecutor share files

B. Describe the relationship among prosecutors, defense attorneys, and the probation department

- Excellent relationship among prosecutor, public defender, and probation
- Public defender understands role and does not “lobby” probation
- All parties meet and have developed a good understanding of the others’ roles
- Some probation officers have developed a “swagger” since getting guns and badges

C. Discuss the exchange of information among probation, prosecutors, and defense attorneys

- Constant case contact with prosecutor and public defender via telephone, e-mail, or face to face
- Open exchange of information

D. What changes or enhancements are needed to improve the partnership?

- Quarterly meetings among prosecutors, public defenders, and probation
- More program buy-in from the public defender
- Generally a good relationship
- Probation should take earlier action on juveniles
- Takes too much time to hire probation officers
- Probation officers rotated out of juvenile hall do not know how to handle cases

- High-intensity caseloads are ineffective without well-trained probation officers
- Need more timely filings from prosecutor
- Prosecutor needs to follow through with charges

XVI. Partnership with Other Collaborative County Departments

A. What are the points of interaction with these departments?

- Juvenile drug court
- Juvenile hall medical, dental, and nursing services
- HHS and probation work together in satellite offices

B. Describe the relationship between probation and these departments

- Good sharing of information
- Excellent relationship with law enforcement agencies
- HHS and education do not respect the probation officers
- Philosophical difference between probation and HHS on public safety versus treatment
- HHS attempts to have probation change its role
- Probation has to be part of a team and not perceive itself as the authority
- Probation and private agencies serve on each other's boards

C. Discuss the exchange of information between probation and these departments

- Excellent

D. What changes or enhancements are needed to improve this collaborative relationship?

- Need joint office locations
- Better public relations
- Meet together more frequently

- HHS needs to provide more programs for longer-stay juveniles in juvenile hall
- Better partnership between HHS and probation
- Managed care needs to be part of the overall probation service system
- A symposium is needed to explain the team relationship between all private players and probation

XVII. Juvenile Probation Partnership with Education System

A. Describe the relationship between the education system and the juvenile probation system

- Overall relationship with education system is good
- Schools are happy to accommodate probation officers on campus
- Probation officers are responsive to on-campus school needs
- Some schools perceive probation as a “negative” because they do not want to be perceived as having problems on their campuses
- Relationship between probation and school system is strained in court school setting because of differences in philosophy and roles within classrooms
- School administration views probation officers as security guards
- Education system wants to engage probation officers in curriculum teaching
- Day reporting center role causes conflict between education and probation

B. What specialized programs or services are provided to juvenile probationers by the education system?

- Education system does not provide any specialized services exclusively for juvenile probationers other than court school
- Community school in Tahoe provides substance abuse, life skills, and pregnancy counseling to probationers through a challenge grant
- Education program at juvenile hall
- SARB program is working well
- SARB has no follow-through with parents, which reduces its effectiveness

C. Discuss the exchange of information between juvenile probation and the education system

- Probation provides updated lists of caseloads to appropriate principals
- Schools communicate problems that probationers are experiencing
- Excellent exchange of information

XVIII. Strengths of Probation Department

A. List and discuss the elements of the probation department services that you believe are outstanding or exceptional

- Chief probation officer is highly respected throughout the county
- Chief probation officer is a wonderful advocate for juveniles
- Emphasis on youth programs is outstanding
- Supervision of probationers is excellent
- Food services operation is exceptional
- In-house training program is excellent
- Good partnership with other county agencies
- Outstanding benefits package for staff
- SMART program
- Tier III program
- Good rapport with managers
- Willingness to create new programs
- Day reporting center
- Outstanding adult drug court
- Open-door policy
- Dedicated staff
- Presentence investigation reports are excellent
- Probation officers are committed to the community
- Probation officers know the community

Exemplary Practices and Programs

The Placer County Peer Court teen court operation is deserving of recognition and possible replication. The genuinely juvenile delinquency prevention aspect of this program makes it unique. By addressing tobacco offenses, the program recognizes that these behaviors can lead to deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system. The working relationships and partnerships among all parties of the justice system and private service providers are exemplary. This is precisely the type of program that reduces the juvenile justice system population.

The Systems Management, Advocacy, and Resource Team (SMART) is a partnership among the Placer County Probation Department, the Department of Health and Human Services, the superior court, and the Office of Education. Under this agreement, multiple family problems that resist categorical single-agency services are addressed. Families and children experiencing complex combinations of problems that require comprehensive services can receive simultaneous aid from these agencies in a one-stop shopping approach. Child welfare services, mental health, substance abuse services, public health, special and alternative education, and probation services are provided in the SMART system. All the primary stakeholders in Placer County agree that this is an important program that has had a major impact on preventing juveniles and their families from entering, progressing, and remaining in the juvenile and adult justice systems.

